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Bundestag approves anti-discrimination law

30 June 2006

BERLIN - Germany's parliament on Thursday approved the country's first anti-discrimination law after a series of last-minute changes aimed at reducing the opposition of business leaders to the move.

The new law - expected to win final approval in the chamber's upper house on July 7 - bans any form of discrimination based on race, ethnic background, religion, sex, sexual identity, age or handicap.

German business leaders had said they feared a wave of lawsuits by people who claimed they were being sacked due to discrimination under the law.

Revisions to the legislation mean that sacking employees will mainly still be covered by existing German legal norms - not the anti-discrimination law.

A further revision stipulates it can only be applied to landlords who rent out more than 50 apartments.

Nevertheless, the opposition Free Democratic Party (FDP) slammed the bill as "nonsense" and warned it would not only fail to help minorities but also create new bureaucracy and endanger jobs.

DPA

Subject: German news

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